AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEDICINAL FLUID, CALLED ÆTHER.

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IN
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THE Publiſher of the following ſhort Account of the ÆTHER having prepared, and ſucceſsfully made Uſe of it in his private Practice, for ſeveral Years, has at length determin'd to endeavour to extend it's Utility, by thus making it public; as he knows of no one who has ever publiſhed it's *medicinal Virtues*; or offered it to Sale in it's *Perfection*; or given the Criteria by which they who are unacquainted with it might diſtinguiſh the *Genuine* from the *Spurious*: And he doubts not but every candid Perſon who examines it, will agree with him, That it carries with it the ſtrongeſt Marks of a valuable Addition to the *Materia Medica*, and therefore ought to lie no longer in Obſcurity.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

ÆTHER, &c.

THIS truly extraordinary Chemical Preparation is not a new Diſcovery, having been known and eſteemed, as a valuable Curioſity, by many of the greateſt Chemiſts and Philoſophers, both Ancient and Modern; particularly by Sir * *Iſaac Newton*, and the Honourable † Mr. *Boyle*, who both mention it in their Works, tho' not by this Name: And therefore before any Thing is ſaid of it's Virtues as a Medicine, it may not be improper to explain the Nature of it, and enumerate a few of it's remarkable Properties, conſidered as a Curioſity in Chemiſtry, in which Light chiefly it has hitherto been view'd by thoſe who have been acquainted with it.

IT is a kind of ETHEREAL OIL, produced by the Decompoſition of the Vinous Spirit by Means of the Vitriolic Acid, and differs eſſentially both from Vinous Spirits and Eſſential Oils in ſeveral Reſpects, tho' it agrees with them in ſome, as will appear hereafter: But as the Vinous Spirit may be decompoſed by means of all the three Mineral Acids, *viz.* the *Vitriolic*, the

* Quere 31ſt, at the End of his Optics.

† Treatiſe on the Producibleneſs of Chemical Principles.

Nitrous

Nitrous and the *Marine*, and as theſe all act differently on the Spirit, they will, of Courſe, produce three different Kinds of ÆTHER; which, from the Name of the Acid employ'd in making them, are term'd *Marine*, *Nitrous*, or *Vitriolic*: The laſt only is the Kind here underſtood, it's Properties being more ſingular and extraordinary, and, as an ÆTHER, more perfect than either of the others; the Reaſon of which ſeems to be, that the *Vitriolic Acid* is a much ſtronger Agent on the Spirit, and more perfectly decompoſes it, than either the *Nitrous* or *Marine*.

It is the moſt light, moſt volatile, and moſt inflammable, of all known Liquids: It ſwims upon the higheſt rectified Spirit of Wine as Oil does upon Water, and flies away ſo quickly as hardly to wet a Hand it is dropped upon; from which Properties it probably has obtained it's Name. It is ſo readily inflammable, as to take Fire at the approach of a Candle, before the Flame touches it. Any Electrified Body will alſo produce the ſame Effect.

It is one of the moſt powerful Solvents known in Chemiſtry: It is neither *acid* nor *alcaline*, and therefore is perfectly free from that ſaline Acrimony with which all the common Volatile Spirits abound: It has a greater Affinity with Gold than *Aqua Regia* has, altho' it will not diſſolve it in the Maſs, or whilſt in it's Metallic Form; but if you add ÆTHER to a ſolution of Gold in Aqua Regia, it preſently takes all the Gold from it's former Solvent, keeping it perfectly diſſolved and ſuſpended, without the leaſt Precipitation; and becomes of a yellow Colour: The ÆTHER, thus ſaturated with the Gold, does not mix with the Aqua Regia, but may readily be ſeparated from it by ſimple Decantation. and thus a true and ſafe *Aurum potabile*

potabile is readily prepared for thoſe who want ſuch a Medicine. The Union of theſe two Subſtances is very remarkable, one being the heavieſt ſolid Body we know, and the other the lighteſt Liquid.

THE ÆTHER is remarkably cold, when dropped upon the Hand, and it affects the Thermometer in an extraordinary Manner; for if the Ball of either a Mercurial or Spirituous Thermometer be immerſed in it, the Spirit or Mercury immediately ſinks conſiderably, tho' both the ÆTHER and the Thermometer have ſtood a ſufficient Time together to be brought to the temperature of the Room, before the Experiment was made. The Thermometers dipt into Water, or Spirit of Wine, in the ſame Manner, ſuffer not the leaſt Alteration.

THEY who chuſe to ſee a further Account of the ſingular Effects which this curious Fluid produces, may peruſe what Doctor *Frobenius*, a *German* Chemiſt, has publiſhed concerning it, in the Philoſophic Tranſactions for the Years 1733 and 1741.

BUT the moſt valuable Qualities of the ÆTHER are it's *medicinal* ones; it having been found by repeated Experience to be an excellent Remedy in moſt *nervous Diſeaſes*; particularly in FITS of all ſorts, whether *Epileptic*, *Convulſive*, *Hyſteric*, *Hypochondriac*, or *Paralytic*: In habitual HEAD-ACHES, GOUT, RHEUMATISM, PAINS IN THE STOMACH, WINDY DISORDERS OF THE STOMACH AND INTESTINES, HOOPING COUGH, ASTHMA, PLEURITIC PAINS, and DEAFNESS; all which Diſeaſes have, in a ſingular Manner, been removed by it; and that the Publiſher may contribute all the Aſſiſtance he can in extending the uſe of this Medicine, the following Methods of applying it are given, which have been attended with Succeſs.

Particular

Particular Directions for uſing the ÆTHER.

In the HEAD-ACH.

A Fit of the Head-ach is almoſt inſtantly removed by applying the ÆTHER externally to the Forehead, by means of a bit of Linen Rag, in the Manner hereafter directed for it's external Application. Or it may be applied to any other Part of the Head where the Pain lies, being firſt ſhaved, if neceſſary. If the Pain is violent, a Doſe of it ſhould be alſo taken inwardly. In ſtubborn Caſes it will likewiſe be ſerviceable to ſnuff a little of the ÆTHER up the Noſtrils, either alone or mixed with equal Parts of Lavender Water, *Hungary* Water, or Brandy; or it may be more convenient to apply a bit of Linen Rag, wetted with ÆTHER, up the Noſtrils. Any of theſe Means, or all of them, muſt be repeated if the Pain is ſo urgent as to require it. To cure this Diſorder radically, when it is of long ſtanding, and to prevent it's Return, the Medicine muſt be taken inwardly for a conſiderable Time every Night at Bed-time, or in violent Caſes, every Night and Morning, in a ſmall Draught of cold Water, according to the General Direction for taking it inwardly, given p. 11. In ſome particular Caſes, Vomits are very ſerviceable.

A VERTIGO.

A Vertigo, Giddineſs, or Swimming in the Head, will generally be removed by proceeding in the ſam Manner as for the Head-ach.

The EPILEPSY.

No Diſeaſe is more difficult to cure than the Epilepſy or Falling-Sickneſs; yet ſeveral Inſtances have occurred

occurred where the moſt violent Degrees of it have been cured, even in grown Perſons, by taking a Doſe of this Medicine regulary every Night and Morning for a conſiderable Time. The Doſe muſt be regulated according to the Age of the Patient, as mentioned in the General Direction, Page 11. If a Pain is felt in any Part of the Head, the ÆTHER muſt be applied to that Part occaſionally, and it muſt be previouſly ſhaved, if neceſſary. It will be proper to give a ſmall Doſe of *Tinctura Sacra*, or of the *Pill. Ruſi*, at proper Intervals, as once a Week or Fortnight. It will alſo, in moſt Caſes, be neceſſary to give now and then a Vomit. If it be ſuſpected that the Patient has Worms, proper Medicines to deſtroy them ought alſo to be given.

In CONVULSIONS.

In Convulſions, or Convulſive Diſorders, give the ÆTHER inwardly, a Doſe two three Times a Day, or oftener, according to the exigence of the Caſe; and it ſhould alſo be applied externally to the Forehead, or any other Part of the Head, during the Fit. If the Patient is full of Blood, bleeding is neceſſary, and if Coſtive, a Doſe of *Manna*, *Senna*, or any gentle Laxative, or a Clyſter, ſhould be given.

Hyſteric and Hypochondriac Disorders.

This Medicine has excellent Effect in *Hyſteric Fits*, and in all that Train of Symptoms which Hyſteric and Hypochondriac Perſons are ſubject to; ſuch as Riſings in the Throat threatning Suffocation, difficult Breathing, Flutterings and Palpitations of the Heart, frequent Fainting, Lowneſs of Spirits, violent Pains in the Head, Languor of the whole Body, Dullneſs of the

Mind

Mind and Senſes, with conſtant Anxieties and Inquietude, *&c.* The Doſe muſt be repeated according to the urgency of the Symptoms; and the Medicine muſt be continued ſome Time after the Complaints diſappear, to prevent a Relapſe. It will be ſerviceable during the Uſe of the ÆTHER, eſpecially in Caſe of Coſtiveneſs, to take at proper Intervals a gentle Purge, ſuch as *Tinctura Sacra*, *Pill. Ruſi*, *Rhubarb*, or *Glauber's Salts*. Bodily Exerciſe of all ſorts contributes greatly to the Cure of theſe Complaints, eſpecially Riding on Horſeback.

PALSY.

In *Palſies*, and all Paralytic Complaints, the Patient, if a grown Perſon, muſt take the quantity of a Tea Spoonful of the ÆTHER every Night and Morning. The Doſe muſt be leſſened in young People, according to their Age. It will alſo be proper to ſnuff a little of it up the Noſtrils once or twice a Day, or apply a bit of Rag wetted with it up the Noſtrils. The ÆTHER muſt alſo be applied externally to the Part affected, at leaſt once every Day. It ſhould likewiſe be applied now and then to the Forehead, or any other part of the Head, eſpecially if the Tongue, Eyes, or any part of the Face or Head be affected. If the Arms or Hands are Paralytic, the Application ſhould be made to the lower and back Part of the Neck, as well as to the Part affected. If the Diſeaſe has ſeiz'd the Thighs, Legs, or Feet, the Application muſt not only be made to them, but likewiſe to the Back Bone, at the Loins. As this Medicine cannot, on account of it's Volatility and Pungency, be properly applied to the Whole of a Paralytic Limb at once, but only to a ſmall Part of it, the Application therefore may be made ſometimes to one

Part,

Part, and ſometimes to another, as ſhall be thought proper.

THIS Diſeaſe will require a longer or ſhorter Continuance of theſe Means, according to the Degree of it, and the Time it has continued. A Vomit ſhould be given, and repeated now and then as the Patient can bear it; but if Vomits ſeem too fatiguing, a Doſe of *Tinctura Sacra* may be given in their room. Paralytic Patients ſhould uſe as much Bodily Exerciſe as poſſible, and the Head, Neck, and the whole Spine, as well as the Parts affected, ſhould be frequently rubbed with a hot and dry Cloth till they appear red.

GOUT.

THIS Medicine is of ſingular Service in the *Gout*, not only while it continues in the Limbs, but particularly when it flies inwards, and attacks the Head, Stomach, or any of the internal Parts; in which Caſes a few Doſes will not fail to give preſent Relief. It ſhould be taken in the Quantity of a Tea Spoonful, two or three Times every Day, or oftener, if the Caſe be violent, during the Gouty Fit. It carries off the Gouty Matter by Urine, which it renders very thick and turbid. At any Time when there is a Neceſſity to abate the exceſſive Pain in the Part affected, the ÆTHER may be applied to it externally, according to the Method given p. 12. It will be proper to continue taking the ÆTHER once or twice a Day for ſome Time after the Fit is gone, and to begin taking it again about the Time of it's expected Return; by which Means, tho' it may not prevent the Return of the Fit, which in many Caſes perhaps ought not to be deſired, yet it will ſhorten it's Continuance, and moderate the Pain of it.

RHEUMATISM.

In Rheumatic Complaints the Patient muſt take a Doſe of this Medicine every Night and Morning, or oftener, if the Pains are violent; and it muſt be continued till the Diſeaſe is removed, or longer, to prevent a Relapſe. If the Pain is fixed in any particular Part, the ÆTHER muſt be applied to it twice a Day, as directed hereafter. It muſt be obſerved that Bleeding very much conduces to the Cure of obſtinate Chronic Rheumatiſms, and muſt be repeated at proper Intervals if neceſſary; the Blood in this Diſeaſe being generally very ſizy.

Diſorders of the Stomach *and* Inteſtines.

This Medicine preſently cures Flatulent Cholics, removes all Windy Diſorders of the Stomach and Inteſtines, and corrects Acidities lodged there. It is alſo found to have excellent Effect in correcting that Weakneſs, or bad Habit of the Stomach and Inteſtines, which ſtudious Perſons, and ſuch as lead ſedentary Lives, are particularly ſubject to, and is attended with ſour Belchings, Heart-burn, Windy Diſtenſions, Pain and Uneaſineſs in the Stomach and Bowels. It muſt be taken every Night and Morning, according to the General Direction below. Care ſhould be taken to prevent Coſtiveneſs in theſe Caſes, which is beſt removed by chewing *Rhubarb*, or taking it any other way, or by a Doſe of *Manna*, or *Glauber's Salts*, taken occaſionally.

The ÆTHER is an extraordinary Diuretic in Dropsies: It is an excellent Medicine in an Asthma, and the Hiccup; and may be looked upon as a Specific in that Diſeaſe of Children called the Hooping-Cough, or Chin-Cough; in all which Caſes it muſt be

be taken inwardly, according to the General Direction below, and the repetition of the Doſe muſt be regulated by the violence of the Diſeaſe.

A Dose of it taken at going to Bed, after Drinking too freely, has been found to prevent the Headach, Sickneſs, *&c.* which uſually follow next Morning.

It has removed Deafness, and Hardneſs of Hearing, by moiſtening a little Cotton with a few Drops of it, putting it into the Ear, and holding the Finger for a few Minutes over it, at the ſame Time ſnuffing a few Drops of it, mixed with Spirit of Lavender, up the Noſtrils, or putting a bit of Rag wet with the ÆTHER alone up the Noſtrils.

It has frequently removed a temporary Dimness of Sight, attended with a Swimming or Uneaſineſs in the Head, by external Application to the Forehead; and is a promiſing Medicine in that Sort of Blindneſs called a Gutta Serena, and in Beginning Cataracts, in which Caſes it ſhould be taken inwardly, as well as applied to the Forehead, and up the Noſtrils.

It is likewiſe found to be of great Service in removing Pleuritic Pains, and Stitches in the Side, by applying it to the affected Part, in the Manner directed for external Application.

The Method of taking the ÆTHER *Inwardly.*

The General Doſe for a grown Perſon is a common Tea Spoonful; and the beſt Vehicle to take it in is a ſmall Draught of Cold Water. If it be only ſtirred in the Water with the Spoon, and the Mixture drank immediately it ſtrikes the Noſtrils by it's Volatility, but may be thought by ſome as agreeable when ſo taken as when the two Liquors are more intimately mixed, by ſhaking them together in a Phial,

and

and from thence pouring them into a Glaſs to be drank; for tho' it has but little Smell in this Manner, it is more warm to the Palate than in the other. The Patient may uſe the Way of Mixing he likes beſt, and if he has any Objection to Water, may take it in any other agreeable cold Liquor. Children in the Month may take two or three Drops for a Doſe; thoſe of a Year old may take ſeven or eight Drops; thoſe of five or ſix Years old may take from twenty to twenty-five Drops, and ſo encreaſing according to their Years: Or it may perhaps be better, in giving it to Children, to mix a Tea Spoonful of ÆTHER, with a convenient Quantity of Water, and, ſhaking it well, give at a Doſe about one twentieth Part of this Mixture to a Child a Month old; about one eighth Part to a Child twelve or fourteen Months old; to thoſe about five Years old one third Part of the Mixture; half of the Mixture to thoſe about ſeven Years old, and two thirds of it to thoſe about fourteen Years old.

The Method of applying the ÆTHER *Externally.*

To apply it Externally, you muſt procure a Bit of Linen Rag, of ſuch a Dimenſion as to be conveniently covered by the Palm of the Hand; moiſten this Rag with a little of the ÆTHER as it lies upon your Palm, and inſtantly apply it to the Part affected, preſſing it very cloſe, ſo as to prevent the Eſcape of it's Fumes, for two or three Minutes, in which Time the Rag will be found dry, and may be taken away. It will be more convenient, on ſome Occaſions, (as in applying it to Paralytic Parts, Rheumatic Pains, and the Gout, to place the Rag upon a Piece of a ſoft, thin Bladder; and, when moiſten'd with the ÆTHER, to bind it gently upon the Part. A ſlight Redneſs uſually

appears

appears upon the Part after the Application, but it quickly vaniſhes ; but it may ſometimes happen, where the Skin is very tender and too much ÆTHER has been applied to the Forehead, or within the Ears, that it may affect the Skin more than the Patient chooſes ; which is avoided by applying a leſs Quantity for the future. This is the Secret of a preſent famous Practitioner, who having a Method ſometimes of concealing his Application, is ſaid to cure the Head-ach, fixed Rheumatic Pains, *&c.* by the Touch of his Hand.

It is very eaſy to conceive, from the extreme Subtlety of this Medicine, that it muſt produce many excellent Effects in ſuch Diſeaſes as thoſe above mentioned, as it is converted into Vapour by a much leſs Heat than the common Animal One ; ſo that being ſwallowed, it can hardly ſubſiſt in any Part of the human Body under any Form but that of an extremely penetrating volatiliz'd Vapour ; and it is perceptible by it's Smell, as it paſſes thro' the Pores of the Skin, ſeveral Hours after taking ; ſo that it's ſtay in the Body is longer, and it's Effects there more durable, than might be expected from ſuch a ſubtle Subſtance.

Notwithstanding the extreme Subtlety of the ÆTHER, it is perfectly innocent and ſafe to take, as it contains nothing that is acrimonious or corroſive ; ſo that it may be given even to the youngeſt Children without Heſitation. It neither purges nor vomits ; nor does it encreaſe any of the ſenſible Evacuations, except that of Urine, and ſometimes that of Sweat, if taken when in Bed ; but as it is ſo diſtinctly perceived by the Smell paſſing thro' the cutaneous Pores of thoſe who take it, it is highly probable that it encreaſes inſenſible Perſpiration.

ANOTHER obſervable Property in this Medicine is, that it does not coagulate or thicken the Serum of the Blood, but thins it; and therefore has direct contrary Effects to all the common Spirituous Compoſitions, when either taken inwardly, or externally applied, and is eſſentially different from the moſt ſubtiliz'd Vinous Spirits; for tho' Spirit of Wine is uſed in making it, yet it is ſo far decompoſed by the Proceſs, that it's Nature is entirely changed. In conſequence of this Quality in the ÆTHER, the Publiſher has ſucceſsfully diſſolved ſome particular obſtinate Tumours, by applying it to them, when other Means have failed——This Hint He hopes will not paſs unnoticed by the Gentlemen of the Faculty, as it is evident no Application whatever can equal it in Subtlety and Diſſolving Power.

THE Medicine ſo much celebrated in *Germany*, and ſo frequently commended and uſed in Practice by the late famous Profeſſor *Hoffman*, under the Title of his *Liquor Mineralis Anodynus*, was nearly of the ſame Nature with the ÆTHER, but not ſo powerful, nor ſo highly ſubtilized.

REPEATED Experience has confirmed the Efficacy of this Medicine in all the Diſeaſes before mentioned; and from the Conſideration of it's uncommon Qualities, it may be preſumed to be an excellent Remedy in many others, if judiciouſly given: Hence it ſeems ſurpriſing that ſo valuable an Addition to the *Materia Medica* as the ÆTHER doubtleſs is, ſhould have been ſo much neglected, or ſo little known; but the Reaſons are, that the Proceſs whereby it was made was kept ſecret by ſome who rated the Preparation at a very extravagant Price, and not ſufficiently attended to by others, who conſider'd it only as a Chemical Curioſity, not as a Medicine.

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THE chief Merit the Publiſher of this Account pretends to, is, *the aſcertaining the Medicinal Virtues of this curious Preparation*, by ſeveral Years Experience, and making them more publickly known; *the reducing it's Price*, which has hitherto been ſo extravagant that had it's Virtues and Properties been known, only a ſmall number of the afflicted could have enjoy'd the Benefit of it; and, *the bringing it to a greater Degree of Perfection than any hitherto ſold*; what he offers being a perfectly rectified Vitriolic ÆTHER.

IT may not be improper to give the Marks by which good ÆTHER may be known. It is perfectly colourleſs, except it has receiv'd ſome accidental Tinge from the Cork of the Phial in which it has been kept; and ſo volatile as to ſtrike the Noſe very powerfully. It's Smell is more or leſs ſulphureous, according to the management of ſome Part of the Proceſs. Wetting the Finger with it, or dropping a little upon the Hand, it vaniſhes inſtantly, and leaves no Moiſture behind; ſo that the Part ſcarcely ſeems to have been wet. Half a Dozen Drops, dropped together upon a Table, will diſappear in a few Seconds of a Minute, and leave only the Appearance of a large oily Ring behind; but if it leaves the leaſt Watery or Spirituous Moiſture, or does not evaporate in much leſs than a Minute, it is not good. The beſt ÆTHER will diſſolve in, or mix with, a certain Quantity of Water; and that is the beſt which requires the largeſt Quantity of Water to diſſolve it: If, therefore, to ſix Tea Spoonsful of Water in a ſmall Phial, you add one of the ÆTHER to be examined, cork up the Phial, and ſhake them very well together; and upon ſtanding a little while ſome part of the ÆTHER appears at Top, in form of Oil, ſufficient to cover the ſurface of the Mixture, it may be pronounced good, (provided it

alſo

alſo anſwers in the other Methods of Trial) and the more appears the better is the ÆTHER; but if none appears, or not enough to cover the ſurface of the Mixture, it was either adulterated, or not well rectified. If to this Mixture of ÆTHER and Water you add a little *Salt of Tartar*, and any Fermentation enſues, the ÆTHER was not well rectified. Upon ſhaking briſkly a Phial containing ÆTHER, if the Bubbles, or Proof as they are uſually called, do not diſappear in leſs Time, and in larger Bubbles, than any other Liquor, (the Vinous Alcohol perhaps excepted,) 'tis not Genuine.

It is the more neceſſary to obſerve theſe Rules of proving the Quality of the ÆTHER, as the imperfect Sorts have been found to diſagree with the Stomach, and produce other bad Effects, beſides diſappointing the Patient's Expectation.

The ÆTHER that has the forementiond Properties, (for there are Preparations ſold by the ſame Name, which are very imperfect Imitations of it) is made and ſold by M. Turner, Surgeon, in *Liverpool*. The Ounce Phial *two Shillings*; the Half Ounce *one Shilling*. The Phials are ſquare; the Word ÆTHER inſcribed on one Side, and M. TURNER on the oppoſite, and ſealed with a Lion gardant, *&c.* Proper Abatement will be made to Druggiſts, Apothecaries, or the Gentlemen of the Faculty who uſe any conſiderable Quantity. To prevent it's eſcape and loſs, a ſmall Quantity of Water is put into each Phial, which ſhould be kept with the Cork downwards, by which Means the ÆTHER is prevented, by the interpoſition of the Water, from evaporating.

The Publiſher has alſo appointed it to be ſold by Mr. *R. Board*, Chemiſt and Druggiſt, in *Grace-church-ſtreet*; and Mr. *J. Wilkie*, Bookſeller, at the Bible in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, London: and Mr. *Peter Wilſon*, Bookſeller, in *Dame-ſtreet*, Dublin.

B M